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C O N F I D E N T I A L TEGUCIGALPA 001702

SIPDIS

STATE FOR INL/LP, DRL/PHD, AND EB/TRA
STATE FOR WHA, WHA/PPC, AND WHA/CEN

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/17/2013

TAGS: [SNAR](#) [PGOV](#) [KJUS](#) [ASEC](#) [HO](#) [KRCM](#)

SUBJECT: LARGEST DRUG BUST IN HONDURAN HISTORY YIELDS
APPROXIMATELY 2,000 KILOS OF COCAINE

Classified By: Ambassador Larry L. Palmer for Reasons 1.5 (B) and (D).

11. (C) SUMMARY: On July 16 Honduran authorities seized approximately 2,000 kilos of cocaine hidden in a secret compartment aboard the "Broad Fire Leader," a Cayman Islands flagged vessel that had departed Panama July 11. The vessel docked at French Harbor, Roatan, a small Bay Island port not normally associated with international commerce. The police arrested six Honduran nationals; two crew members and four other individuals associated with the operation. This seizure is being touted as the largest in Honduran history. It raises the total amount of cocaine seized this year in Honduras to almost 4,000 kilos. END SUMMARY

12. (C) On July 16 Honduran authorities seized approximately 2,000 kilos of cocaine hidden in a secret compartment aboard the "Broad Fire Leader," a Cayman Islands flagged vessel with registration number 731916 that had departed Panama July 11. The vessel was docked at French Harbor, Roatan, a small port not normally associated with international commerce. According to press reports, police were alerted to the presence of the vessel by an anonymous phone call. Police spokesman Leonel Saucedo stated that the special investigative police, known as the DGIC had prior knowledge concerning the ship's illicit activities. Authorities arrived on the scene at approximately 0600 but did not board the vessel until 0700. (Comment: In fact, the Embassy TAT passed intelligence information to the INL funded joint intelligence center (CEINCO) that then forwarded the information to the DGIC. End Comment.)

13. (C) The ship's manifest stated that its cargo of beer, tires, and electronic goods was intended for a local Honduran business, but authorities soon determined the business did not exist. Due to foot-dragging by Public Ministry prosecutors, however, police did not actually search the vessel until approximately 1730, over 11 hours after the first call had been placed to the District Attorney's office. Police then brought in drug sniffing dogs which alerted authorities to the existence of drugs on the ship. A cursory observation of the vessel suggested a secret compartment below the main hold. A search of this compartment yielded 92 packages of cocaine totaling approximately 2,000 kilos.

14. (U) Police immediately arrested the ship's two captains, Danley Miles Woods (38) and Edmund Kickson (49), both Honduran nationals and residents of Roatan. Police later arrested four other Honduran nationals associated with the operation: Ricky McKensi (24); Ferry McKensi (26); Chrisman Lee McKensi (18); and Orny Johnson (19)
Palmer